

WILDFLOWERS!

March 26, 2019

Many areas in the park, as well as the Borrego Valley, have great displays of wildflowers now.

The **Visitor Center** and **Hellhole Canyon** areas are in bloom, with very nice patches of desert dandelion, phacelia, and other annuals, as well as glorious brittlebush and chuparosa shrubs.

Start early if you want to hike in **Borrego Palm Canyon**, as the parking lot fills up very quickly! If you miss out in the morning, try later in the afternoon. The **Alternate Trail** starts from the trail up to the campfire center, and is loaded with amazing amounts of a wide variety of flowers. Feet will get wet on the **Main Trail**, due to high water at stream crossings. Keep your eyes and ears open for bighorn sheep on both trails!

Desert Dandelions are blooming in great profusion throughout the Borrego Valley. Take Ocotillo Circle north from Palm Canyon Drive (across from the XL gas station) and it becomes Lazy S, which winds through residential areas. When you reach Bighorn Road (street sign was missing 3/26, but it is the street after Santa Fe), a right turn will take you to Borrego Springs Road, where you should turn left and continue north. A collection of metal statues lines Borrego Springs Road, which bends and becomes Henderson Canyon Road. Before heading east, this is a good place to get out and walk around a bit, enjoying the statues and the flowers.

Heading east on Henderson Canyon Road will take you to DiGiorgio Road, where you should turn left if you want to check out the mouth of Coyote Canyon. Drive north on DiGiorgio Road to see even more expansive fields of cheery yellow desert dandelions on private land. The dirt road going into **Lower Coyote Canyon** is open to All-Wheel-Drive or 4WD vehicles only. There is room for 2WD parking at the end of the pavement. Flower seekers can explore on foot to the EAST for a field of desert sunflowers. **PLEASE RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY adjacent to the flower fields, and stay out of the citrus orchards. Do not drive or park on the private dirt road.**

Henderson Canyon Road (site of 2017's "SuperBloom"), has a nice bloom of yellow desert sunflowers joining white dune primrose and fading purple sand verbena. Lots of parking, plus portable toilets (near Borrego Valley Road) and a wildflower information trailer (at east end).

Heading east on Highway S-22, there is a large pullout between miles 30 and 31 with room for parking. The vista includes fading fields of purple sand verbena and desert sunflowers.

Just west of mile marker 35, park and walk into Arroyo Salado, Coachwhip Canyon, or Ella Wash. You'll find most flowers are past their prime, but desert lilies and lupine may persist here. **CAUTION: Dirt roads into the Borrego Badlands require four-wheel-drive!**

The "**Ocotillo Forest**" along Borrego Springs Road south of Christmas Circle is starting to bloom.

South-facing slopes above San Felipe Wash ("**Texas Dip**" on Borrego Springs Road just north of Highway 78) have extensive displays of yellow Parish's Poppy. **San Felipe Wash requires 4WD!**

The **Cactus Loop Trail**, across the road from Tamarisk Grove campground, has hillsides covered with poppies, along with a variety of small "belly flowers" growing low. Try **Yaqui Well Trail** too, as well as the **Narrows Earth Trail**. The dirt road into Plum Canyon is lined with flowers. 2WD cars should stay to the right when the road forks.

In the southern part of Anza-Borrego, **Little Blair Valley** (near mile marker 23 on Highway S-2) is in bloom. **June Wash** still has nice flowers, though many are past their peak. Park near mile marker 42 on Highway S-2 and walk up the wash (all-wheel-drive or 4WD vehicles can drive up the dirt road). The **Carrizo Badlands Overlook** (mile marker 52) is also worth checking, as well as the entrance to **Carrizo Wash** (mm 48; 2WD vehicles should park on the pavement) and various pullouts along the highway.

For maps and directions, visit our website at www.parks.ca.gov/anzaborrego.

For updates on blooming areas, call our **Wildflower Hotline: 760-767-4684**.